THE PORT FOLIO,

(NEW SERIES)

BY OLIVER OLDSCHOOL, ESQ.

Various, that the mind of desultory man, studious of change and pleased with novelty, may be indulged—Cowp.

Vol. VI. *Philadelphia, Saturday, September* 10, 1808. No. 11.

ORIGINAL PAPERS.

For The Port Folio.

TRAVELS.

LETTERS FROM GENEVA AND FRANCE.

Written during a residence of between two and three years in different parts of those countries, and addressed to a lady in Virginia.

(*Continued from page* 150.)

LETTER XL.

I AVAILED myself to the utmost of the little time my —— staid with me: I carried him to the different places of the environs, whence he could form the best idea of this beautiful country; to Ferney, where the shade of Voltaire seems still to hover, to the neighbouring mountain of Saleve, and afterwards to Meillerai; and when the rain would not permit us to go out, we had old times to talk over, and new books to look into; and we had the inexhaustible subjects of winter grass, English and Latin prosody, the properties of the Lever, and the law of nations. Of those branches of the Alps which shut in Geneva to the eastward, the most conspicuous is Saleve, which, though at the distance of nearly five miles, appears to one who enters the opposite side of the city, to be hanging over it. Its height is upwards of 3000 feet, and its original length must have amounted to five or six miles. I say original, for some powerful cause, acting in very remote times, has divided into two mountains what must have been, apparently, one: the general opinion is, that the instrument upon this occasion was the water of that great ocean, which once covered the face of this country, and which suddenly, and with irresistible violence was made to change its level. The confused accumulation of rocks at the foot of the hollow that separates the two mountains, renders the [illegible]ncy of water probable, and [illegible] marine shells which are found by myriads either in beds, or separately, in various parts of both, and the sand now covered

by a thin layer of vegetable soil on the top of the higher Saleve, show that water to have been salt. The interval between the two mountains is a fertile valley; it looks like the bed of some river which had been lately turned aside, and the appearance is the more singular from the long ascent which leads to it by the only road that is practicable on horseback; about midway in the valley is the little Savoyard village of Moneti, and this is succeeded by well cultivated fields, that end abruptly by a precipice on the very edge of which stand the ruins of the Chateau de l'Hermitage: this castle must have been erected in very distant times, long before the use of artillery was known, and when the protection of a family from outrage, and security from the spoils of war were the objects principally attended to in choosing a situation. There cannot be a more beautiful and variegated view than is commanded from this spot, which though in a deep valley, as to the mountains on each side of it is yet elevated to the height of several hundred feet above the plain below. The lake, the city of Geneva, the towns, villages, and cultivated hill sides, and the great basin, which for a while held in the diminished waters of the ocean, are spread out in all their magnificence of extent. The citizen of Geneva, says Monsieur de Saussure, must above all men enjoy this view, he beholds his native city, he follows with his eyes the fortifications, the harbour, and the publick walks, and he traces the portions of subject territory which lie embosomed within the neighbouring States: he thanks heaven, which placed the seat of all his heart holds dear in a land of freedom, and admires with gratitude those coinciding causes, and that reunion of circumstances, which must forever secure the independence of Genoa. What the feelings of a Genevan are who now looks down upon his native city from the Chateau de l'Hermitage, may be conceived without any great effort of the imagination. I declare to you, that when full of this passage of Monsieur de Saussure, I placed myself as he describes, my feelings, stranger as I am, and from a very distant country, were those of sorrow and indignation. Revolutions must, I know, take place in the political, as fermentations do in the natural world; and I have that reliance on the ways of Heaven which makes me hope, that every thing will still be for the best. But when we reflect upon the waste of human life from one end of France to another; upon the exertions that have been made by a great, a gallant, and a generous nation, and consider what a death stroke has been given not only to the liberty of their defenceless neighbour, but to every thing like liberty among themselves; when we behold the individuals whom the caprice of fortune has elevated to those distinctions in society, which but a few years ago constituted the only crime that hurried numbers to execution or into exile, —we cannot but presume to hope, that Providence has condescended to contract an enormous debt towards a large portion of mankind, which will be paid hereafter to their posterity.

The ride to Ferney occupied a morning very agreeably. You will see in the descriptions of various travellers a good account of the house and of the neighbouring town, which does infinite honour to the sagacity, to the taste, and to the humanity of Voltaire: the bed in which he lay, and the furniture

of his chamber remain as he left them, and there are several valuable pictures of distinguished persons hanging up in the room. The King of Prussia's put me in mind of our old friend Baron de Steuben, but the eyes, though blue, are very far from being such as bespeak a melting soul: they are the eyes of a tiger in the act of leaping upon his prey. The memoirs of Thiebaud, which I have lately read, relate intirely to the court of Berlin, and to the private life of this great King, who was a singular composition of good and bad; of what is great in the estimation of mankind, and of what is mean: with twelve cooks in his service at a time, he never possessed more than six shirts, and could bear to see the friend whom of all men he loved best, in a state but little removed above poverty. These memoirs, will no doubt have been translated into English, and I advise you by all means to procure them: they will bring you better acquainted with some singular individuals, whom you may have heard of, and will disclose to you a great many original views of human life; you will see with satisfaction, that the account which Baron de Trenck gives of himself, is by no means a romance, and that he was a person of more merit, and still less deserving of his hard fate, than appears even by his own memoirs; you will be struck also with the extremes of superstition and incredulity in the celebrated authour of the Jewish Letters; he could ridicule those who said their prayers, and yet would not upon any account but have turned the head of his bedstead to the East, and could never be prevailed upon to begin a work or undertake a journey on a Friday; the conduct of the King towards him in his old age puts the friendship of the great and powerful in a very striking point of view.

LETTER XLI.

My next excursion with my ——— was to Meillerai along the Savoy side of the Lake. The country is by no means as well inhabited or as well cultivated as the Pays de Vaud; the soil indeed is not in general as good, nor the exposure as favourable for the cultivation of the vine; and the government of the King of Sardinia, though not oppressive, was not such as gave encouragement to industry and to the arts: at present the inhabitants seem rather stunned, than roused, and not well awake from the death-like slumber of former times. The town of Thouon, which we passed through, is advantageously situated for trade either with the interiour country, or with the opposite shore of Switzerland, but appears the seat of poverty and of uncleanliness; at the northern extremity there is a terrace which commands a view of the whole extent of the lake from Chillon to the neighbourhood of Geneva, and along the fertile countries of La Vaux, and La Cote; it also commands a nearer view of the antique mansion of Ripaill, where Amadeus of Savoye spent his time so agreeably. The weather was not favourable to our going there, though we passed very near it, but my disappointment was allayed by knowing it to have been confiscated, a circumstance which has often thrown a repulsive gloom over places that I could have visited with pleasure both in America and in Europe. A company of speculators from the Pays de Vaud purchased in the time of assignats this ancient residence of princes and priests, with its venerable cloisters and its chapel, this noble do-

main of vineyards and meadows, with its spacious park and its extensive woods of old and lofty trees, for less money than the tiles which cover the principal buildings would now sell for. There must surely come a time when the government of France will revise these sales, and let the injustice of confiscation be in some measure expiated by the publick advantage derived from it. Near Evian is a mineral spring which is frequented by great numbers of people every summer, and the town itself might be rendered a place of delightful residence; it stands on the slope of a fertile hill, which leads down to the lake in a beautiful and healthy country, and with a command of gushing waters like those of Staunton; but the streets are dark and dirty, the houses bespeak wretchedness and indolence, and the waters, which might be made to answer so many delightful purposes, are sacrificed to the working of a few ill constructed mills. Immediately out of Evian the road descends to the brink of the lake, and follows it three or four miles, so as to remind us very much of Long-bay; but instead of the mishapen heaps of sand on one side, there are vineyards, and shady woods, or green fields thickly interspersed with walnut trees: nothing, however, not even the lake of Geneva, and its fertile banks, could efface from my mind the remembrance of the great ocean, which is perhaps of all objects the most sublime. In about an hour from Evian we reached the commencement of the new road, which is at first a stately causeway, and then a terrace cut in the rock, where it descends almost in a precipice to the side of the water. This, when finished, will be the common passage into Italy, and will no doubt be travelled by many a young man, who, with the whole scenery of the Nouvelle Heloise before his eyes, will conceit that he is passing under the very rock that St. Preux wrote from. Meillerai is a miserable village of fishermen, and raisers of stone, who cannot be made to understand the advantage they are to derive from a road being carried through their country,—in a few years they will know better, and will think no longer of a little piece of garden ground, or of a favourite walnut-tree, which may have been sacrificed upon the occasion. We took a boat and rowed out upon the lake, and the little narrow street of wretched houses we had just left, seemed now, as they presented themselves in a bay upon the margin of a smooth lake, and beneath impending woods, to be the very seat of blissful retirement. The part we now floated on is known by actual sounding to be upwards of 1000 feet in depth, so that the mountain behind the house at Belvoir would form a little island of a few acres, which is all that the lake requires to complete the beauty of its scenery. I should have said more to you at times of this great lake, but the account given of it by Coxe, contains every thing worth your notice. That sudden increase and decrease of the water upon the shore, which he mentions as taking place at times, is as inexplicable as ever—it is as if some superiour power amused itself with setting the waters of this great basin in motion, as children might those of a bucket; there is a periodical increase in the month of August, more easily accounted for, as it is evidently connected with the melting of the snow, and this fortunately is the case, when from the heat of the sun, and the dryness

of the season, the exhalations from the shores of the lake might otherwise be dangerous.

We returned to Geneva the next day, and my —— being no longer able to prolong his stay, I determined to accompany him by Vincy as far as Giez; these are two villages in the Pays de Vaud, the one near Rolle, and the other but a mile from Granson on the lake of Yverdun. I will tell you in a future letter, why you should be particularly interested in these villages, and hope that you will hereafter look for them in every large map of Switzerland you meet with. It is now the 13th of November, and we are once more fixed in Geneva for the winter, with the prospect of setting out for Paris in the spring. Of publick news I have said nothing: indeed we know no more of what the greater powers intend, than the spectators of the opera do of the machinery behind the scenes. The powers of Germany seem taken in by France as Atalanta was by Meleager, they are besides humility itself. Russia swells and threatens, but does nothing, and the King of Naples is worse than between Sylla and Charybdis, for Russia and France have each made demands; and he cannot comply with those of the one power, without embroiling himself with the other. Switzerland and the Seven United Provinces, now known by the name of the Batavian Republick, are, it seems, on the eve of some great change under the pressure of that mighty hand which moulds them as it pleases. In short, of all Europe, the little republick of St. Marino seems the wisest, and the happiest portion. They had the good sense some years ago to refuse an accesion of territory, which was offered them by the Directory of France, and now reap the reward of it. I wish our government in America had been possessed of the same spirit of moderation. Our rulers were fearful of a dangerous neighbour in Louisiana, but the proximity of hostile powers acting like the pressure of water upon the component parts of a crazy vessel, might have kept the various States united much longer than I now see a prospect of: the crimes and the misfortunes of Europe will not however, I hope, have been exhibited to our view without some good consequences; the principles of revolt, the holy duty of insurrection will not surely be confounded with the rights of man.

For The Port Folio.

CRITICISM.

An Ode, by Petrarca.

To institute comparisons between the poetry of different and remote nations is a prominent object of our inquiries; and it is therefore with peculiar pleasure that we select the following ode of Petrarca, accompanied by the English version of Sir William Jones, and an imitation of the first Stanza, by Voltaire. As the production of an Italian poet, it is entitled to a place in our series, in behalf of its country; added to which we are governed on this occasion by the very sentiments expressed concerning this poem by the English translator:

'The ode of Petrarca was added, that the reader might compare the manner of the Asiatick poets with that of the Italians, many of whom have written in the true spirit of the Easterns. Some of the Persian songs have a striking resemblance to the sonnets of Petrarch; and even the form of those little amatory poems was, I believe, brought into Europe by the Arabians: one would almost imagine the following lines to be translated from the Persian.

Aura, che quelle chiome bion de e crespe
Circondi, e movi, e se' mossa da loro,
Soavemente, e spargi quel dolce oro,
E poi 'l raccogli, e'n bei nodi l'increspe,

since there is scarce a page in the works of Hafiz and Jami, in which the same image, of *the breeze playing with the tresses of a beautiful girl*, is not agreeably and variously expressed.'

ODE
TO THE FOUNTAIN OF VALCHIUSA.

Canzone 27.

Chiare, fresche, e dolci acque,
Ove le belle membra
Poze colei, che sola a me par donna ;
Gentil ramo, ove piacque
(Con sospir mi rimembra)
A lei di fare al bel fianco colonna;
Erba, e fior,' che la gonna
Leggiadra ricoverse
Coll' angelico seno ;
Aer sacro sereno
Ov' Amor ev' begli occhi il cor m' aperse;
Date udienza insieme
Alle dolenti mie parole estreme.
S'egli è pur mio destino,
El cielo in ciò s'adopra,
Ch' amor questi occhi lagrimando chiuda,
Qualche grazia il meschino
Corpo fra voi ricopra ;
E torni l'alena al proprio albergo ignuda :
La morte fia men cruda,
Le questa speme porto
Aquel dubbioso passo;
Che lo spirito lasso
Non poria mai in piu riposato porto
N'en piu tranquilla fossa
Fuggir la carne travagliata, e l'ossa.
Tempo verrà ancor forse
Ch' all' susato soggíorno
Torni la fera bella e mansueta;
E la, ov' ella mi scorse
Nel benedetto giorno
Volga la vista desiosa e lieto,
Cercandomi, ed, o pieta,
Giá terra infra le pietre
Vedendo, Amor l'inspiri
In guisa che sospiri
Si dolcemente che mercé m'mipetre,
E faccia forza la cielo
Asciugandosi gli occhi col bel velo :
Da' bei rama scenda
Dolce nella memoria
Una proggia di fior sovra 'l suo grembo ;
Ed ella si sedea,
Humile in tanta gloria
Coverta giá dell' amoroso nembo :
Qual fior cadea sul lembo,
Qual sulle treccie bionde,
Ch' oro forbito e perle
Eran quel di a vederle,
Qual si posava in terra, e qual sull'onde ;
Qual con un vagor errore
Girando parea dir, " Qui regna Amore."
Quanto volte diss'io
Allor pien di spavento
" Costei per fermo nacque in paradiso,"
Cosi carco d' oblio
Il divin portamento
E'l volto, e le parole, e'l dolce riso
M' aveano; e si diviso
Dall imagine vera,
Ch'i 'dicea sospirando,
" Qui come venn io, o quando ?"
Credendo esser' in ciel non lá' dov 'era
Da indi ni quà mi piace
Questa erba si ch' altrove non o pace.
Se tu avessi ornamenti quant' ac voglia,
Protesti arditamente
Uscir del bosco, egir' infra la gente.

AN ODE
OF PETRARCH,
TO
THE FOUNTAIN OF VALCHIUSA.

Ye clear and sparkling streams,
Warm'd by the sunny beams,
Through whose transparent chrystal Laura played ;
Ye bow'rs that deck the grove
When Spring her chaplets wove,
While Laura lay beneath the quiv'ring shade;
Sweet herbs and blushing flow'rs,
That crown yon vernal bow'rs,
Forever fatal, yet forever dear ;
And ye, that heard my sighs,
When first she charm'd my eyes,
Soft breathing gales, my dying accents hear !
If heav'n has fix'd my doom,
That Love must quite consume
My bursting heart, and close my eyes in death,
Ah ! grant this slight request,
That here my urn may rest,
When to its mansion flies my vital breath.
This pleasing hope will smooth
My anxious mind, and sooth,
The pangs of that inevitable hour ;
My spirit will not grieve
Her mortal veil to leave
In these calm shades, and this enchanting bow'r,
Haply, the guilty maid
Through yon accustom'd glade
To my sad tomb will take her lonely way,
Where first her beauty's light,
O'erpower'd my dazzled sight,
When love on this fair border made me stray :
There, sorrowing, she shall see,
Beneath an aged tree,
Her true, but hapless lover's lowly bier;
Too late her tender sighs

Shall melt the pitying skies,
And her soft veil shall hide the gushing tear.
Oh! well remember'd day,
When on yon bank she lay,
Meek in her pride, and in her rigour mild;
The young and blooming flow'rs,
Falling in fragrant show'rs,
Shone on her neck, and on her bosom smil'd;
Some on her mantle hung,
Some in her locks were strung,
Like orient gems, in rings of flaming gold;
Some, in a spicy cloud
Descending, call'd aloud,
"Here Love and Youth the reins of empire hold!"
I view'd the heavenly maid;
And, wrapt in wonder, said,
"The groves of Eden gave this angel birth;"
Her look, her voice, her smile,
That might all heaven beguile,
Wafted my soul above the realms of earth:
The star-bespangled skies,
Were open'd to my eyes;
Sighing, I said, "Whence rose this glitt'ring scene?
Since that auspicious hour,
This bank, and od'rous bow'r,
My morning couch, and ev'ning haunt have been.
Well may'st thou blush, my song,
To leave this rural throng,
And fly thus artless to my Laura's ear;
But were thy poet's fire
Ardent as his desire,
Thou wert a song that heav'n might stoop to hear!

M. de VOLTAIRE's *paraphrase of the* 1*st* Stanza:

Claire fontaine, onde amiable, onde pure,
Ou la beauté qui consume mon cœur,
Seule beauté qui soit dans la nature,
Des feux de jour évite la challeur;
Arbe heureux, dont le feuillage
Agité par les Zephirs
La couvris de son ombrage,
Qui rapelles mes soupirs,
En rapellant son image,
Ornemens de ces bords, et filles du matin,
Vous dont je suis jaloux, vous moins brillantes qu'elle;
Fleurs, qu'elle embellissait, quand vous touchiez son sein;
Rossignols, dont la voix est moins douce et moins belle;
Air, devenu plus pur; adorable sejour,
Immortalisé par ses charmes;
Lieux dangereux et chers, où de ses tendres armes,
L'Amour a blessé tous mes sens;
Ecoutez mes derniers accens,
Recevez mes dernières larmes!

SELF-BIOGRAPHY.

A man, who voluntarily offers himself to the notice of the publick, in the character of his own biographer, will incur the imputation of vanity, and probably with some reason; since it must have been a certain degree of self-estimation, which induced him to form the project of writing his own memoirs. With vanity, however, better ingredients may be combined; and, instead of judging illiberally, respecting the motives of such undertakings, or cherishing any vulgar prejudices against those who make themselves the hero of their tale, we would rather encourage individuals of cultivated minds, and of active varied lives, to present us with the details of their mental progress, with the fruits of their experience, and with the results of their matured reflections. An intellectual and moral portrait of this kind, if executed with skill and fidelity, becomes as much a study for the philosopher, as any production of the mimick art can be for the painter.

It will be objected, indeed, that we can give no person credit for being perfectly open and generous, when his character and reputation with posterity, depend on his own recitals. What temptation, it will be said, is here afforded to concealment on one part, and to exaggeration on another! Who, in such a predicament, can display that fortitude and greatness of mind which are necessary to annihilate self, in the love of honesty and truth? who, moreover, let his intention be ever so pure, is altogether exempt from the influence of self-deception? That the *egotistick* biographer should be perused with caution and allowance, no one will dispute: yet it must not be forgotten, that there are points of

view in which his report is peculiarly desirable. He alone can develop the state of his own feelings and sentiments; and to his contemporaries it must be extremely curious to compare his estimate of himself with that which, from external observation, they have formed of him.

For The Port Folio.

The University of Philadelphia has many claims to our most favourable regard. A rising reputation, excellent governours, an admirable medical school; a correct yet mitigated discipline, a pious yet liberal doctrine, all conspire to increase our zeal to promote the interests of such institutions as contribute to the substantial good of the community. By the recommendation of one of the governours of this flourishing seminary, a gentleman not less distinguished for the urbanity of his manners, than for the soundness of his principles and the extent of his information, we have received copies of some of the academical exercises on a recent occasion. The following, the production of Mr. Robert Smith, is certainly honourable to the youthful writer, and will be perused with emotions of enthusiasm by the American patriot. A family picture is always regarded with interest.

AN ORATION,

BY R. SMITH,

On the advantages of the United States.

Towards the close of the fifteenth century, when Ferdinand and Isabella filled the throne of Spain, the attention of Europe was awakened by the discovery of a new world. Columbus intrepidly accomplished this great event through difficulties and dangers, through the disdain and discouragement of princes, through the horrours of imprisonment and chains; and the noble discoverer of America, worn out by continued suffering, ended his days in despair. During the lapse of more than two centuries emigrants from different nations of Europe gradually effected a settlement of the northern continent, and drove the savage Indian towards the more uncultivated parts of his country. Persecutions in their native land, forced many unhappy subjects of Great Britain, to brave the boisterous waves of the Atlantick and all the dangers of savage war, and to establish themselves in the north-eastern part of our country, while other associations of adventurers settled in the more southern districts. The sound of the implements of labour was heard along the coast, and the well-built town rose in the place of gloomy forests and immeasurable wilds. Thus did the American colonies gradually rise in population and importance, under every circumstance of danger and distress, and without the fostering arm of the mother country. But not only did Great Britain refuse to them assistance, she even imposed on them restrictions injurious to their freedom. Under her arbitrary exactions the spirit of an injured nation at length rebelled: the cry to arms was heard throughout the country, and our little band of patriots erected the standard of American liberty. As the fearless mariner, who boldly opposes his little bark to the fury of the tempestuous wave, that, loud roaring as it slowly rolls along, seems to bring with it his melancholy fate, or as the towering tree, which, raised above its humble brethren, dares the lightning that shoots athwart the sky, so did the undaunted heroes of our revolution, defy the vengeance of superiour strength. And lo! The mariner has arrived at his destined port, the lofty tree has spread its branches through the land, and hid its head amid the clouds of heaven. Through the aid of that Providence, which, with its awful thunders, withered and dispersed the fury of our foes, and led by our illustrious Washington, we have taken our place among the nations of the earth, and flourish in liberty and independence. Our government, admirably adapted to our situation, is, perhaps, as pure in its principles, and perfect in its con-

struction, as human wisdom could possibly have devised. A constitution, the choice of the people, guards their rights with jealous care, and distributes to each individual, his proper situation with regard to the whole. Compare it with the ancient governments of Greece and Rome. Under these indeed, heroes have conquered on the plains of Marathon and Zama, these *have* given birth to a Cato and a Miltiades, to a Leonidas and a Scipio. Under these, Demosthenes has poured forth the torrents of his eloquence, and Cicero has charmed a listening world. But, alas! have not these governments been marked by bloody revolutions, and by the most savage slaughters; by the factions of contending parties, and by the iron rod of tyranny? Has not a Thrasybulus governed *there*, and *here* a Caligula, a Nero, or a Commodus, dishonoured, by his crimes, the throne of the Cæsars? From the bloody records of these celebrated states, we turn with pleasure to those of our own happy country, whose annals are blotted by no daring crime, and defaced by the cruel deeds of no ambitious chieftain. Thus, although we are amazed at the awfulness and grandeur of the thundering torrent, which dashes itself precipitately along, overwhelming the smiling fields of the industrious husbandman, blasting his growing crops, and baffling all his expectations:—we rather delight to view the smooth meandering stream, which refreshes the country around it, and beautifully wanders along the romantick vale. Exhausted by its own force, the impetuosity of the one may soon subside into a petty rivulet, while the inexhaustible streams of the other promise ever to remain undiminished and unchanged.

We possess, my countrymen, such natural advantages as few other nations of the globe can boast. Situated in the northern temperate zone, we neither burn beneath continual heat, nor yet are chilled in regions of eternal snow. Nor are we cramped within a petty territory. The waves of the Atlantick ocean wash more than one thousand miles of our coast, and furnish a noble channel of communication with all the nations of Europe. The ample bays of the Chesapeake and the Delaware are eminently calculated for all the purposes of commerce, while the Missisippi, the Susquehanna, and the Hudson, roll their waves, in awful majesty to their parent ocean. The admiring traveller views with astonishment, the mighty waters of our inland seas, and gazes with dread on their boisterous tempests. The lofty mountains of Alleghany hide their tops in clouds, and seem to look grandeur and solemnity. Our verdant vallies, crowned with all the beauty of the spring, delight the eye, and our fertile plains, decked by the hand of cultivation, furnish abundant crops to the industrious farmer.

As a commercial people we have held a respectable standing among the nations of the earth. The American flag has waved in honour at the ports of every maritime people, and we have seen our ships returning home fraught with the produce of every clime. The spices of India have been wafted on our gales, the teas of China, the cloths of England, the linens of Germany, and all the productions of the western Indies, have crowded our capacious harbours. The enterprize of our north-eastern adventurers has navigated the western coast of America, and dared the winter of both the poles. Our fearless fishermen have plied around the foggy banks of Newfoundland, and returned to their ports laden with the spoils of the ocean. A temporary check, which, perhaps, may be calculated for the best, has, indeed been given to our commercial enterprize, but when this shall be removed, it will revive with renewed vigour, and yield to that of no other people.

During the period of a nation's infancy, it can scarcely be expected that the fine arts should advance much towards perfection; but, from

the encouragement of the liberal, and from the specimens hitherto exhibited, we have reason to hope that America may soon rival, in this respect, those who now surpass her. In the mechanick arts we are inferiour to none. The sound of the hammer, and the hum of industry is heard in our streets, and the honest tradesman quickly rises into affluence and fortune. The spires of churches, and the walls of colleges and schools are daily rising around us. American literature is fast improving; and, 'ere the lapse of a century, poets may celebrate the beauties of our groves and vallies, of the romantick banks of our rivers and our streams, in strains not less charming and harmonious than those which have immortalized the Thames, the Avon, and the Ayr. Extending our view beyond the ocean which rolls between us and the nations of Europe, let us trace for a moment, their unfortunate situation compared with that of independent America. France and England, like two mighty waters, are contending for superiority in awful strife. The glories of the once heroick Switzerland are extinguished forever. Amid the fertile vallies, and the awful glaciers of his native hills, the brave, the independent Swiss owned the dominion of no arbitrary lord. But when the throne of the Bourbons fell, with it declined the liberties of Switzerland. Spain has lost her once envied superiority. The triumphs of the successours of Mahomet are over, and the faded glories of the crescent now decorate the turban of an imperious tyrant. Germany is tottering to her fall, and the rays of liberty illuminate the heroes of the north, feebly as the light of the natural sun.—While such is the situation of the European world, we, my countrymen, are reposing in the lap of tranquillity and peace. We hear the thunders of war rolling at a distance, but they approach us not. The roar of cannon is never heard among our hills, nor do the prayers and praises of a grateful people to ascend the throne of God, accompanied by the groans of the wounded and the dying.

Casting our eyes round us, we behold Despotism unfurling her standard and establishing her dominion in many regions of the globe. She has erected an altar composed of millions of slaughtered victims, and her sweetest offering is the groan of despair. She has made the polar snows to blush with human blood, and deluged whole nations with desolation and dismay: but ours, my countrymen, is consecrated ground, and she dares not violate our repose. And, ah! long as the world shall last, may the benign goddess of Columbian liberty protect her beloved asylum from the influence of this scourge of mankind: and, though "borne on the wings of the wind," she shall disseminate herself in poisonous gales over every other region of the globe, may the lofty mountains and impenetrable forests of Columbia, forever bid defiance to her utmost rage.

From the awful scene of the desolations of Europe, where can liberty retreat. She has left her abode on the rocks of Uri, she has winged her flight across the Atlantick, and she now rests her wearied head on the American mountains. Long may she there remain! and there may the incense of grateful millions offered at her altar, propitiate her smiles! And may that overruling God, who "rides on the whirlwind and directs "the storm," conduct us through the long avenues of time in glorious independence, and cause every nation of the earth, to venerate the name of Columbian Liberty!

For The Port Folio.

The subsequent Oration "On the present and future growth of Philadelphia," was spoken at a late publick Commencement by Mr. Mifflin Few topicks of panegyrick are more fertile than those which are or may be employed in praise of the rising greatness of this city. Here neither the interested capitalist nor the eloquent oratour has any occasion for the arts of exaggeration. Description halts after re-

ality in any narrative of the rise and progress of the metropolis of the United States. Even the Embargo which benumbs every thing else, seems to operate as a powerful stimulus to the growth of Philadelphia. Every hour adds something to the convenience, the beauty, or the aggrandizement of this city, and while a certain fantastick establishment in the woods is fast dwindling into dust and contempt, this *forsaken* metropolis, the future forum of our oratours and the seat of our statesmen, is constantly augmenting her comforts and splendour. Mr. MIFFLIN has done justice to his theme, and in a very spirited sketch has drawn no overcharged picture.

AN ORATION

On the present and future growth of Philadelphia.

Scarce has a century revolved since the soil on which we live, was the haunt of wild beasts and wilder men. Here, surrounded as we are by the comforts and delicacies of life, the retrospect of a few years, seems to stamp truth on the fabled days of old, when castles and cities arose by magick art, and the pathless wilderness was converted, by talismanick touch, into smiling culture and flourishing towns.

For who that surveys the busy scenes that surround us; who that contemplates the rising streets of this fair city, but is led to calculate them as the offspring of age, as the result of long and continued toil; as the work of man for generations back. Who in casting his eye over the spacious buildings that rise with such improved beauty, but must suppose us seated amid the rich harvest of a thousand years' labour!

Until our forefathers were led to this new and beautiful hemisphere, the course of improvements was of slower growth; and those arts that now embellish society; that science by which the mind of man is enlightened, spread with tardy steps among the enslaved races of the older world. Torpid and nearly extinct for many ages, they revived amid darkness, to cast a feeble and glimmering light over the benighted days of our European progenitors. They reached, when perfected, but a favoured few, until the Genius of Freedom, which is the Genius of our Government, and by whom they have ever been fostered, introduced to the dwellings of our humblest citizens, some testimonies of their use.

Those of us, whose trans-atlantick ancestors dwelt in wretched huts, destitute of furniture, and incommoded by the smoak of a solitary fire, inhabit here a house of permanency and comfort; repose on the down that of yore was allotted to the higher ranks alone.

The arts of husbandry, no less propitious to our health and pleasure, have multiplied and cheapened the delicious products of the soil, and made that, which was once an expensive luxury, to be now the easy purchase of the poorest citizen.

Philadelphians! Behold with pride the work of three generations! Behold the fruit of unshackled industry; of tolerant and equal laws! what a mass of wealth; what a proud and beautiful display of ease and elegance! thirteen thousand dwellings, thirty churches, innumerable ware-houses, and extensive publick institutions, have arisen from the dark bosom of a forest, within the memory of man! and which of you who contemplates this miraculous growth will dare to calculate our future progress! shall the flowery banks of the Schuylkill be your boundary? no, already you have burst the limits of your venerable founder,

and spread yourselves for miles on the deep and busy shores of the Delaware. Those shores whence are taken to the utmost verge of navigation the redundancy of your products. Borne on the most perfect models of naval Architecture, your flag visits the rich countries of the East, and protects on its return the stores of Asia. The wealthy planter of the Antilles, and the gaudy Spaniard of La Plata, loll their indolent days away in the high-polished coach of your work-shops, and amid this splendid show of mechanical perfection, behold the seat of the muses, towering with becoming pride! Its classes, open to all our citizens, unfold the book of science, and rear in the youthful mind a bed of flowers, where weeds were wont to grow.

The parent, heretofore anxious for the education of his sons, sent them at a vast expense and much danger to the foreign schools of Europe. In those distant climes, their morals were unwatched, and their political principles corrupted: but now, within the walls of your Seminary, he shall find some of its classes to equal, and perhaps eclipse, their oldest prototype. No longer shall the rival schools of Edinburgh and Leyden, boast of their pupils from the shores of Columbia; no longer shall the honours of European kings be confined to the chairs of their royal dominion; for the professours of our own Universities have extorted from the justice of more than one crowned head, the reward of that merit which formed of late the exclusive claim of their own subjects.

A powerful Emperour conceived the project of founding a capital about the time that the illustrious Penn migrated hither: and his project was executed with celerity and elegance. But his were the means of an unmerciful despot. Peter of Russia buried in the fens of *Narva*, two hundred thousand of his subjects. He drew by violence, by privileges and bounties, the resources of his vast empire in aid of his favoured plan. Amid the desolation of sickness, military laws and death, this enterprising monarch planted the foundations of his future residence.

Not so the great man who planned our city. Its growth was the growth of industry, cherished by the wisest of Legislators. No discordant cries of compulsion were heard to embitter the toil that raised our walls: No bayonet goaded the artificer of Penn. Just, humane, and pacifick, he hushed even the murmers of the savage tribe, who held without enjoyment, the site on which we live. These aborigines relinquished, for a fair compensation, those rivers that now bear on their bosoms the products of that soil, which erst a woody tract of hunting ground, fed but a few wretched families of red men.

For then a dreary line of matted woods,
In one brown mass obscured our silver floods,
Umbrageous trees, impervious to the light,
Formed one unvaried, dark, and cheerless sight.
No labouring ox, or herds of fruitful ewes,
Gave animation to these pict'resque views.

How different now! can it be that on this very spot—here where this holy temple stands, encompassed as it is, by busy streets, thronged with people, and sounding beneath the constant stir of commerce; can it be that on this very ground, many now present, a few years since, have sported in the frolick of youth amid the wild trees of the forest!

And how have these things been brought about? are they of the hot-bed growth of royal favour? has the strong arm of power lavished its wealth and its authority to aid your labours? has some *Idomeneus* brought hither his Trojan spoils to raise the walls of this new Salentinum? No: I repeat to you again, fellow townsmen, that all you see is the spontaneous fruit of the soil of liberty: of the guardian laws of freedom, of the sober, intelligent, and constant labour of your husbandmen; of the enterprise, the distinguished enterprise of your merchants. Itis they that have planted this germe of a city: Yes, Philadelphians, this germe of a city! for great and wealthy as it is, how small in its present extent to that which our sons and perhaps our own declining days shall witness!

Already in anticipation, I behold your intersecting avenues, from North to South, from river to river, crowded with capacious buildings, decorated with the magnificent works of our own manufactures. Then shall the guilded spire, the lofty turret, and the marble edifice, rise in proud show on our western sites, then shall the seaman's song, and the white canvas of commerce animate the now silent waters of the Schuylkill; while our beautiful environs, adorned by villas innumerable, shall display their comforts, in publick roads, canals, and verdant parks.

These are not dreams of idle speculation, but the fair and probable conjecture of what is to be from what has been. But to secure this prosperity we must cling with enthusiasm to those laws, to those principles, to that virtue, by which we have been led thus far; and then let us boldly hope that under the superintending protection of Almighty God, these our fond expectations will not be disappointed.

"Columbia rules a brave and grateful land,
And scatters blessings with a liberal hand:
What though no wave Pactolian laves her shore,
Nor gleam her caverns with Peruvian ore;
Yet she has mines, which need no *rod* to trace—
Search not her *bosom*, but survey her *face*."

BIOGRAPHY.

CHARLES MONTAGUE,
Earl of Halifax.

The family of Montague has produced many great characters. The above nobleman, one of its most distinguished ornaments, was the youngest son of a younger son of an earl of Manchester, and educated at Westminster, under Dr. Busby, whence he was sent to Trinity College, Cambridge, being designed for the church. A poet by nature, and wedded to a rich countess, with the provision of a prudent father, he seemed to have all that a son of Apollo could desire. Poetry and politicks are not often allied. Lord Dorset, pleased with his poem on the death of Charles II. and still more with the Travesty of Dryden's Fable of "The Hind and Panther," into "The City and Country Mouse," introduced him to William III. who received him as was due to the authour of the epistle on his Majesty's victory in Ireland.* The brilliancy of Montague's genius was such, that his works as a poet had been read, *admired*, and patronised, by Dorset. Cambridge left her accustomed precision to honour him: in the senate he commanded the utmost attention; and in the palace he was trusted, promoted, and ennobled. He was the active principle that moved the council, the ex-

* The story of Dorset's introducing Montague to William III. as a *mouse*, may be true, as it afforded that witty nobleman an opportunity of *saying a good thing*.

chequer, and the treasury. His mind prevaded every department of the state. The king valued him as his chief support; queen Anne's prejudices gave way to applause; and George I. created him earl of Halifax, and gave him the garter. This nobleman, whom the Commons had recommended as "deserving William's favour," persecuted him afterwards with a virulence that disgraced them; a strange retribution this for restoring the credit of the national bank; for completing a new coinage of the silver money in two years, which was judged impossible; for his first proposing and effecting the union of the British kingdoms; and his earnestly promoting the settlement of the crown in the Brunswick line. In short, the gentry saw paper instead of bullion, and were frightened. He was seized with a sudden illness, when at the head of the treasury, at the house of Mynheer Daverwoord, one of the Dutch ambassadours, which in four days deprived Britain of one of its greatest ornaments. The earl died May 19, 1715, aged 54, to the confusion of the eminent practitioners, doctors Shadwell and Scigerthal, his Majesty's English and German physicians, sir Richard Blackmore and Mead, who declared that to be a pleurisy, which was an inflammation of the lungs: so little do the faculty know of internal maladies! After lying in state in the Jerusalem chamber, the remains of this illustrious man were deposited, as he had directed, in general Monk's vault, in Westminister-Abbey. Possessed of the most exalted sentiments, he too much despised the base cunning of inferiour minds. Having no child by Ann, countess dowager of Manchester, and disappointed in a second connexion, he solaced himself with the Platonick friendship of the gay and beautiful niece of his friend Sir Isaac Newton, Catherine, widow of Col. Barton Young, whom at his death he enriched, in return for the pleasure and happiness he had in her conversation." In the poem of the Travesters is this epigram:

Beauty and wit strove each in vain,
To vanquish Bacchus and his train;
But Barton with successful charms,
From both their quivers drew her arms;
The roving God her sway resigns,
And cheerfully submits his vines.

Sir John Holt.

Sir John Holt, born December 30, 1642, at Thame, in Oxfordshire, was a wild and unmanageable youth; his frolicks were numerous at Abingdon school, and Oriel College, Oxford, where he was entered a gentleman commoner. After his good sense had subdued the propensity to juvenile indiscretion, his application to his studies was unwearied. Called to the Bar, he was made a serjeant at law Feb. 9, 1684, appointed recorder of London, knighted in Feb. 1685–6, by James II. and made king's serjeant April 22, 1686. Objecting to the rapid strides of James against law and liberty, he resigned his recordership in April, 1687. The king having withdrawn himself, some settlement of the government became necessary, and it was well known that the prince of Orange came for, and would receive nothing less than the crown; the conditions were to be determined by the convention. Holt was chosen by the peers, at St. James's, with Maynard, Pollexfen, Bradford, and Atkinson, to assist them in their consultations. His abilities raised him at once to the highest office in the Court of the King's Bench, being appointed lord chief justice, April 17, 1689, which he held twenty-one years, a circumstance never known before nor since. To an offer made him of presiding in Chancery, he said, "I never had "but one cause in Chancery; and, "as I lost that, I cannot think myself "qualified for so great a trust." The law and justice were never administered with more effect than when he presided in the King's Bench, and all

their terrours sat on his brow.* It happened that a poor old decrepid creature was brought before him as a sinner of great magnitude, "what is her crime?" "Witchcraft." "How is it proved?" "She uses a spell." "Let me see it." A scrap of parchment was handed to him. "How came you by this?" "A young gentleman, my lord, gave it me, to cure my daughter's ague." "Did it cure her?" "O yes, my lord, and many others." "I am glad of it.—Gentlemen of the Jury, when I was young and thoughtless, and out of money, I, and some companions as unthinking as myself, went to this woman's house, then a publick one, we had no money to pay our reckoning, I hit upon a stratagem to get off scot free. On seeing her daughter ill, I pretended I had a spell to cure her; I wrote the classick line you see, so that if any one is punishable it is me, not the poor woman the prisoner." She was acquitted by the Jury, and rewarded by the chief justice. This most exalted character, comprising every excellence, died of a lingering illness, March 10, 1710–1, aged 67; and was buried in the church of Redgrave in Suffolk. He married a daughter of sir John Cropley, by whom he had no child. The Judge published, in 1708, sir John Keyling's Reports, with annotations of his own, with three modern cases of great importance.

* In the Banbury cause he told the House of Peers, that they ought to respect the law which had made them so great. Presiding over which, he should disregard any of their decisions; he would not even condescend to give them a reason for his conduct. In the same manner he set the Commons at defiance; *they* sent to demand reasons, he gave none:—the Speaker and a select number of the House went in person to the Court of King's Bench, his answer was, "I sit here to administer justice; if you had the whole House of Commons in your belly, I should disregard you; and if you do not immediately retire, I will commit you, Mr. Speaker, and those with you. Where there is a right," said he, "there is a remedy;" when it was urged that no injury could be done by a returning officer refusing a legal vote, against the sense of the other Judges, he directed a satisfaction to be given. Neither his compeers, nor the houses of parliament separately could bend, or, even both of them collectively, intimidate him; his invincible courage was equalled only by his incorruptible integrity. Queen Ann was compelled to dissolve the Parliament, that the acrimony between the two Houses might cease. A mob assembling before a trepan-house, in Holborn, the guards were called out: "Suppose," said he, "the populace will not disperse, what will you do?" "Fire on them," replied an officer, "as we have orders." "Have you so! then take notice, that if one man is killed, and you are tried before me, I will take care that every soldier of your party is hanged." Assembling his tipstaves, and a few constables, he went to the mob and explained to them the impropriety of their conduct; at the same time promising that justice should be done against the "crimps," the multitude dispersed.

PRINCE OF PEACE.

I am accused of having treated this Spanish favourite indecorously, and add the following circumstance in his favour.

Don Romos de Salas, a respectable professour and doctor of laws, in the university of Salamanca, was condemned to six years imprisonment in the inquisitions, for certain speculative opinions: against this decision his friends appealed; but the Archbishop of Toledo, "considering de Salas as a bold, unbending spirit, a philosopher of the present age, and one who had presumed to doubt the necessity of an inquisition," confirmed the sentence.

The Prince of Peace being applied to for his intercession, laid the business before the king, who ordered the proceedings to be revised; this the Grand Inquisitor refused, but his majesty enjoining obedience to his mandate, the ecclesiastick paused, and relying on his influence with the queen, ad-

dressed himself to her majesty on his knees, and in pathetick language, but without success.

It was on this occasion, that the queen of Spain burst fourth into the following animated words: "Your grace," for our spirited female was speaking to the Archbishop of Lorenzo, who was using *his* endeavours after the Grand Inquisitor had failed, "your grace must excuse me, for I can listen no longer; it is to these inquisitors, and to hypocrites like these, that the sovereigns of Europe are indebted for all the revolutions, and all the misfortunes they have experienced." De Salas was set at liberty, and this is said to be the first instance, in the Spanish annals, in which a decree of the inquisition had been reversed.

In certain late remonstrances which took place between the English and Spanish courts, the Prince of Peace has been censured for his degrading submission to Gallick indignity; what might not any man be obliged to submit to, rather than expose his throat to the knife of a footpad, or his head to the pistol of a highwayman?

[*Lounger's Common Place Book.*

ODE

Occasioned by reading an Ode to Bishop Percy, on the Reliques of Ancient Poetry.

When Conway's surge with horrid roar,
Had whelm'd the Druid's tresses hoar,
Hovering o'er the haunted flood,
The Genius of the sacred wood,
High the dripping mantle shook,
And floating lyre uplifted took,
Where bards immortal, mid the tuneful spheres,
Chant to Heroick shades the songs of elder years.

"Mantle, erst by Merlin given,
"Dipt in rainbow tints of Heaven,
"Fraught with many a wizard spell,
"Mortal language dare not tell;
"Spells that human hearts control,
"Awe the sense and melt the soul;
"At Terrour's voice bid Health's bright rubies fly,
"Or gem with pearls divine soft Pity's angel eye.

"Relick of the awful Seer,
"Wond'rous key of Joy and Fear;
"Who can boast a kindred spirit?
"Who thy magick power inherit?
"What child of Earth shall now aspire
"To touch the doom-denouncing lyre?"
The Minstrel Choir in mute attention hung,
Whilst to his airy harp thus Taliessin sung:

"Bear them from that fatal shore,
"(Mona's melody is o'er)
"To the Nymph of fairy song,
"Caledonia's groves among,
"Bid her build the lofty rhyme;
"Bid her raise the hymn sublime,
"Fit for the King of Bards in days of yore;
"Fit for the mighty Lord of legendary lore."

Worthy of the high command,
Hark! the Virgin's potent hand
Strikes the chords of pain and pleasure,
In a sweetly-varied measure;
She with Pythick ardour firing,
Felt within the God inspiring;
And whilst the shell resounded PERCY's praise,
We heard the heaven-born strains of Arthur's golden days.

EPITAPH.

Nymph! over thee, chaste, fair, and young,
Each bosom breathes a sigh;
Applauses flow from every tongue,
And tears from every eye.

Still lives, and ever shall thy name,
Thy beauty only died:
Envy has nothing to proclaim,
Nor Flattery to hide.

The price of The Port Folio is Six Dollars per annum, to be paid in advance.

Printed and Published, for the Editor, by SMITH & MAXWELL,

NO. 28, NORTH SECOND-STREET.